

Role of Culture in Partnerships

Instructor Notes	Participant Guide/Instructional Materials
<p data-bbox="235 415 779 556">We tend to think of culture as something other people have. We often don't realize that we, ourselves, have culture. We all have it, and we need to learn what it is.</p> <p data-bbox="235 598 698 630">Handout: A Summary of the World</p> <p data-bbox="235 1732 747 1795">Ask: How many of you think there is a right way to put toilet paper on the roll?</p>	<p data-bbox="824 598 1380 739">If we could shrink the Earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, and if all existing human ratios remained the same, it would look roughly like like:</p> <ul data-bbox="824 781 1380 1575" style="list-style-type: none">• There should be 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere (North and South) and 8 Africans.• 52 would be female; 48 would be male.• 70 would be non-white; 30 white.• 70 would be non-Christian; 30 Christian.• 50 percent of the entire world's wealth would be in the hands of only 6 people and all 6 would be citizens of the United States.• 11 would be homosexual; 89 would be heterosexual.• 80 would live in sub-standard housing.• 70 would be unable to read.• 50 would suffer from malnutrition• 1 would be near death; 1 would be pregnant.• 1 would have a college degree.• 1 would own a computer. <p data-bbox="824 1612 1339 1680"><i>Source: Dr. Phillip M. Harter, Stanford University School of Medicine</i></p>

Culture provides the lens through which we view the world.

It provides the logic by which we order and the grammar by which it makes sense.

Culture is central to what we see, how we make sense of what we see, and how we express ourselves. An example would be if there were light shining through holes in a roof. Each person viewing the light coming through the holes would see something different; we all have different perspectives.

Culture is all about who we are, and how we identify ourselves.

As we take on the exciting challenge of working together, cultures sometime conflict. We can and do misunderstand each other, and react in ways that can hinder what are otherwise promising partnerships.

Today, we'll talk a little bit about the hows and why of this, and how we can understand the influence of culture on all that we do/think/are.

In so doing, we become more aware. Cultural differences won't go away, but we can learn how to think about them and work with them, use the to our advantage. Everyone brings something different to the table, in part due to cultural differences.

Oftentimes, (most of the time) most of us are unaware that culture is acting upon us, and influencing how we think about the world and how we respond to particular situations. Sometimes we are not even aware that we have values that are different from each other.

The goal of today is to make you all a little

bit more aware of how culture acts upon us, both by talking about what culture is, and how it works, but also how it affects how we interact.

Now that we know a little bit about what culture is, I'd like you all to take a few minutes and do a cultural survey with your neighbors, and then we'll all tell each other about our cultural background.

One of the interesting things about western culture is that our identity is tied to what we do. In FWS, we identify ourselves by what we do for the organization and how long we have been with the organization.

Exercise: Take 10 minutes and talk with your neighbor. Introduce yourselves to them from a cultural perspective. I am purposely not giving you a definition at this time.

Now if you want, you can tell your class a little bit about your cultural background. I'll start. (Instructor provides a cultural introduction.) Instructor should mentally count to 10 to give participants time to volunteer.

Understanding what motivates people, what drives people—that's the key to partnerships.

When we first meet people, we register many things right away, such as age, ethnicity, gender, etc. Assumptions are made from the things we register, and sometimes the assumptions are flat-out wrong. Sometimes when people look like us, we think they think like us, act us, etc.

How do you begin to understand others' cultures? You practice, practice, practice at communication. It all comes down to personality, which comes from culture.

<p>Page 3-6 A definition of culture.</p> <p>Culture is a set of rules or standards, that the members consider proper and acceptable. Culture consists of abstract values, beliefs, and perceptions of the world that lie behind peoples' behavior. These are shared by members of society, and are considered acceptable within that society.</p>	<p>A definition of culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Culture is a set of rules or standards that, when acted upon by the members of a society, produces behavior that falls within a range of variance the members consider proper and acceptable. ➤ Culture consists of abstract values, beliefs, and perceptions of the world that lie behind peoples' behavior and that their behavior reflects. These are shared by members of society, and when acted upon, they produce behavior considered acceptable within that society. ➤ Culture is what is normal to all that are part of it. ➤ We don't think about it—but culture is who we are—It provides the basic parameters to our understanding of how things work. We assume that others share our understanding, and when they don't, it can be confusing or even cause conflict.
<p>Page 3-7 Culture informs all that we do</p> <p>Based on how others talk/look/act.</p>	<p>Culture informs all that we do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What assumptions do we make about others based on our cultural background? ➤ Think about Gender/ethnic/education/disciplinary background and how that affects how we think about the world? Others? ➤ How can it affect partnerships? <p>Culture must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Satisfy the basic needs of those who live by its rules. ➤ Provide for continuity and provide an orderly existence for members of society. ➤ Strike balance between self-interests of

<p>Adaptive means practices help things along. Recycling is a culturally acceptable practice and also good for the environment.</p> <p>Maladaptive means a cultural norm does not help things along. For instance, having many children may be culturally accepted but not the best choice for the environment. In the FWS, people are encouraged to work at more stations in order to be promoted, but this practice does not promote strong partnerships.</p> <p>What about the FWS is adaptive/</p> <p>What is maladaptive? <i>Annual budgets</i> <i>Insertion of politics into science</i></p> <p>Page 3-8 Culture is basic to being part of a community.</p> <p>Culture takes the natural biological urges that all humans have and that we share with all animals and teaches us to express it in cultural ways. i.e. eating (when and what), sex, waste elimination, shelter</p> <p>but also fight/flight impulse (what are culturally appropriate ways to deal with this?)</p> <p>Bottom line: (Sharing culture is basic to being part of a community)</p>	<p>Culture is adaptive and culture is maladaptive.</p> <p>Culture takes the natural biological urges that all humans have and that we share with all animals and teaches us to express it in cultural ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I.e., eating (when and what), sex, waste elimination, shelter ➤ But also fight/flight impulse (what are culturally appropriate ways to deal with this?) <p>Culture is basic to being part of a community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Through culture people create, remember, and deal with ideas. ➤ Sharing culture is basic (and essential) to being part of a community. ➤ Everyone knows what is expected (not that we always abide by the expectations) – but we know what the rules are – and we know the consequences of following them, and not following them.
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<p>Have participants turn to the Activity page on 3-13 and give them 5 minutes to begin completion of the page. For “Community Culture,” use whatever community you choose. After 5 minutes, ask a couple of participants to offer their responses.</p> <p>State: This is the first step in recognizing the different cultures that exist in your partnership. This helps to identify commonalities.</p> <p>When doing this activity, try to figure out what your “trigger points” are and how they fit in the context of a partnership.</p> <p>Page 3-11 Culture and Communication</p> <p>There are many ways in which cultures, as a whole, tend to vary from one another, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different attitudes towards conflict (overt versus passive) • Different approaches to completing tasks (now versus whenever) • Different decision making styles (definitive versus wishy-washy) • Different attitudes towards disclosure (i.e., divulging lots of personal information versus none) • Perhaps the biggest is communication styles. 	<p>Culture and Communication</p> <p>Culture provides the lens through which we view the world, the logic by which we order it and the grammar by which it makes sense.</p> <p>Culture is central to what we see, how we make sense of what we see and how we express ourselves.</p> <p>As we take on the exciting challenge of working together, cultural values sometimes cause conflict. We can misunderstand each other, and react in ways that can hinder what are otherwise promising partnerships.</p> <p>Oftentimes (most of the time) many of us are unaware that culture is acting upon us, and influencing how we think about the world, and how we respond to particular situations. Sometimes we are not even aware that we have values that are different from others!</p> <p>There are many ways in which cultures, as a whole, tend to vary from one another.</p>
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<p>It is important that people have the time and opportunity to say what it is they want to say. For instance, those who communicate by telling a story.</p>	<p>One of these s differences in communication styles.</p> <p>The way people communicate varies widely between and within cultures.</p> <p>One aspect of communication styles is language usage.</p> <p>Across cultures, some words and phrases are used in different ways—for example, the meaning of “yes” varies from “maybe I’ll consider it” to “definitely!”, with many shades in between.</p> <p>Another major aspect of communication style is the degree given to non-verbal communication.</p> <p>This includes not one facial expressions and gestures, but also involved personal distance, eye contact, sense of timing, handshake, etc.</p> <p>In addition, different norms regarding the appropriate degree of assertiveness (verbal and non-verbal) in communicating can lead to cultural misunderstandings (i.e. what does yelling mean? Anger? Excitement?).</p> <p>In summary: Culture Drives Communication</p> <p>People communicate what is meaningful to them.</p> <p>What people say (as well as what they don’t say) is culturally driven.</p> <p>How the say it is culturally driven.</p> <p>We interpret others’ communication (and behavior, values, etc.) through our own cultural lens—thus there is lots of opportunity for miscommunication.</p>
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